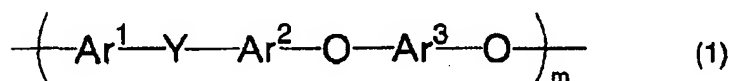


Amendments to the Claims:

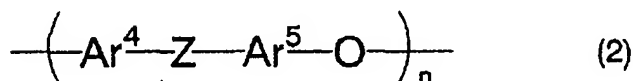
This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A block copolymer comprising at least one segment having an acid group which is represented by the following formula (1) and at least one segment substantially free from acid groups which comprises repeating units represented by the following formula (2):



(wherein, m represents an integer of 10 or more, Ar¹, Ar² and Ar³ represent each independently a divalent aromatic group which is optionally substituted by an alkyl group having 1 to 10 carbon atoms, alkoxy group having 1 to 10 carbon atoms, aryl group having 6 to 10 carbon atoms or aryloxy group having 6 to 10 carbon atoms, at least one of Ar¹ and Ar² having an acid group, and Ar³ may have an acid group or may be free from acid groups. Y represents -CO- or -SO₂-, and each Y in the segment being independently -CO- or -SO₂-.)

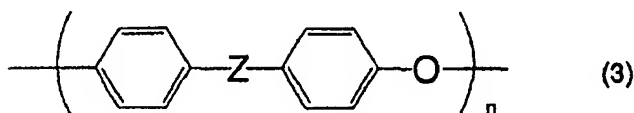


(wherein, n represents an integer of 10 or more, Ar⁴ and Ar⁵ represent each independently a divalent aromatic group which is optionally substituted by an alkyl group having 1 to 10 carbon atoms, alkoxy group having 1 to 10 carbon atoms, aryl group having 6 to 10 carbon atoms, aryloxy group having 6 to 10 carbon atoms or fluoro group. Z represents -CO- or -SO₂-, and each 2 in the segment being independently -CO- or -SO₂-), wherein the weight composition ratio of a segment having an acid group to a segment substantially free from acid groups is from 10:90 to 33:67.

2. (Original) The block copolymer according to Claim 1, wherein the weight composition ratio of the segment having an acid group to the segment substantially free from acid groups is from 5:95 to 40:60.

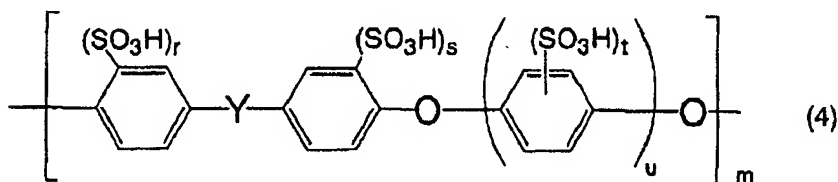
3. (Previously Presented) The block copolymer according to Claim 1, wherein the acid group is a strong acid group or a super strong acid group.

4. (Previously Presented) The block copolymer according to Claim 1, wherein the segment substantially free from acid groups is represented the following formula (3):



(wherein, n and Z have the same meaning as described above).

5. (Currently Amended) The block copolymer according to Claim 1, wherein the segment having an acid group is represented by the following formula (4):



(wherein, m and Y have the same meaning as described above. r and s represent each independently 0 or 1, and r+s being 1 or 2; u represents 1 or 2, and t represents 0, 1 or 2).

6. (Previously Presented) The block copolymer according to Claim 1, wherein the ion exchange capacity is from 0.8 meq/g to 2.4 meq/g.

7. (Previously Presented) A polymer electrolyte comprising the block copolymer according to Claim 1 as an effective component.

8. (Original) A polymer electrolyte membrane comprising the polymer electrolyte according to Claim 7.

9. (Original) A polymer electrolyte composite membrane comprising the polymer electrolyte according to Claim 7, and a porous substrate.

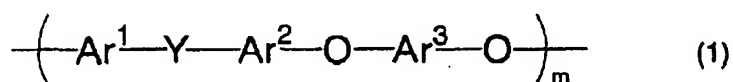
10. (Original) A catalyst composition comprising the polymer electrolyte according to Claim 7.

11. (Previously Presented) A polymer electrolyte fuel cell comprising the polymer electrolyte membrane according to Claim 8.

12. (Previously Presented) A polymer electrolyte fuel cell comprising the polymer electrolyte composite membrane according to Claim 9.

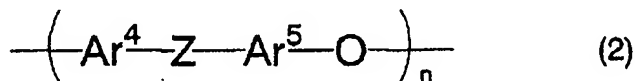
13. (Previously Presented) A polymer electrolyte fuel cell comprising the catalyst composition according to Claim 10.

14. (New) A block copolymer comprising at least one segment having an acid group which is represented by the following formula (1) and at least one segment substantially free from acid groups which comprises repeating units represented by the following formula (2):

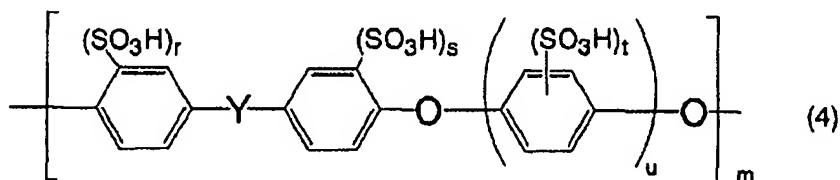


(wherein, m represents an integer of 10 or more, Ar¹, Ar² and Ar³ represent each independently a divalent aromatic group which is optionally substituted by an alkyl group having 1 to 10 carbon atoms, alkoxy group having 1 to 10 carbon atoms, aryl group having 6 to 10

carbon atoms or aryloxy group having 6 to 10 carbon atoms, at least one of Ar¹ and Ar² having an acid group, and Ar³ may have an acid group or may be free from acid groups. Y represents -CO- or -SO₂-, and each Y in the segment being independently -CO- or -SO₂-.)



(wherein, n represents an integer of 10 or more, Ar⁴ and Ar⁵ represent each independently a divalent aromatic group which is optionally substituted by an alkyl group having 1 to 10 carbon atoms, alkoxy group having 1 to 10 carbon atoms, aryl group having 6 to 10 carbon atoms, aryloxy group having 6 to 10 carbon atoms or fluoro group. Z represents -CO- or -SO₂-, and each 2 in the segment being independently -CO- or -SO₂-), wherein the segment having an acid group is represented by the following formula (4):



(wherein m and Y have the same meaning as described above, r and s represent each independently 0 or 1, and r+s being 1 or 2, u represents 1 or 2, and t represents 0, 1 or 2).

15. (New) The block copolymer according to Claim 14, wherein the ion exchange capacity is from 0.8 meq/g to 2.4 meq/g.

16. (New) A polymer electrolyte comprising the block copolymer according to Claim 14 as an effective component.

17. (New) A polymer electrolyte membrane comprising the polymer electrolyte according to Claim 16.

18. (New) A polymer electrolyte composite membrane comprising the polymer electrolyte according to Claim 16, and a porous substrate.
19. (New) A catalyst composition comprising the polymer electrolyte according to Claim 16.
20. (New) A polymer electrolyte fuel cell comprising the polymer electrolyte membrane according to Claim 17.
21. (New) A polymer electrolyte fuel cell comprising the polymer electrolyte composite membrane according to Claim 18.
22. (New) A polymer electrolyte fuel cell comprising the catalyst composition according to Claim 19.